

Montana Protocol for Crisis Response

Office of Public Instruction (OPI) 2005-06

For the purposes of this response protocol, a ***crisis*** is defined as: *a sudden, unanticipated event that profoundly and negatively affects a significant segment of the school population and often involves serious injury or death or threatened injury or death.* **Crisis incidents** at school may include natural disasters, fires, the use of weapons or explosives, or the death of a student, staff member or someone in a student's immediate family. School superintendents or their designated responsible official may determine when a "crisis incident" has occurred. **Protocol** means: *the methods the OPI will use in responding to a school-related crisis.*

NOTE: It is not the intent of this protocol for the OPI to assume jurisdiction during any crisis situation, nor is it the intent to develop "disaster or crisis" plans for the state. It is the intent of this protocol to assist local schools in returning students to classes in an efficient and effective manner, and to provide the services and technical assistance to schools that we are requested to provide and are capable of providing. The intent is to utilize OPI resources to deal with the situation after the crisis has occurred and has been brought under control.

OPI Protocol for Response to a School Crisis

The OPI will assign a "Crisis Management Team" (CMT) that will include persons designated to:

- provide information to the media,
 - work with the school,
 - refer the LEA request for assistance checklist to appropriate OPI staff, and
 - coordinate with management.
1. Membership on the Crisis Management Team for the 2006-07 school year:
 - Deputy Superintendent **Bud Williams** (directs the team) [444-7325, (office cell) 431-0151 or (personal cell) 799-3494]
 - Assistant Superintendent, **Spencer Sartorius** [444-4434 or (h) 443-4809]
 - Homeland Security, **Josset Gauley** (444-3538)
 - Communications Director, **Joe Lamson** [444-3160 or (c) 431-4738]
 - Attorney, **Cathy Warhank** (444-4399)
 - Chief of Staff, **Madalyn Quinlan** [444-3168 or (c) 431-5141]
 - Administrator, Special Education, **Bob Runkel** [444-4429 or (c) 431-7981]
 - Personnel Director, **Kathy Bramer** (444-3161)
 2. Steps in dealing with a crisis:
 - A. Initial Report of Crisis Event -- When an OPI staff person receives word of an LEA crisis, the staff person is to report this information to (start with first person and report to the first available person): (1) **Bud Williams** Deputy Superintendent, (2) **Madalyn Quinlan**, Chief of Staff, (3) **Cathy Warhank**, Attorney, or (4) **Kathy Bramer**, Personnel. One of these four will call the Crisis Management Team (CMT) together.
 - B. Media -- The central voice to the media will be **Joe Lamson**. As the CMT liaison to the media, the liaison will determine who, if anyone other than the liaison, will talk with the media and what can be talked about with the media. The CMT media liaison

will have a “Fact Sheet” on school-related violence among youth. The fact sheet will be updated annually and include: (1) data on adolescent violence-related behaviors, (2) what OPI has done about the issue, and (3) what we can do for schools. (**Madalyn Quinlan** serves as backup)

- C. Deputy Superintendent's Role --The Deputy’s role is to contact the district to verify the incident and determine the facts. This is reported back to the team. The Deputy will also ask the LEA superintendent whether or not OPI assistance is needed. If possible, this should be done within 24 hours of an incident or of the time OPI is notified. (**Cathy Warhank** serves as backup)
- (1) If OPI’s assistance is **not** needed, the Deputy monitors the situation. Staff and other LEAs are informed as necessary.
- (2) If OPI’s assistance **is** requested, **Bob Runkel** will fax the request for assistance form to the district. This form will identify the type of assistance requested by the LEA. Once the form is returned, Bob will secure the appropriate OPI personnel to assist in the response. (**Josset Gauley** serves as backup)
- D. Information to OPI Staff – **Joe Lamson** will inform OPI staff concerning the crisis, deal with rumors and provide updates as required. (**Kathy Bramer** is backup)
- E. Information to Other LEAs – **Madalyn Quinlan** will keep other Montana LEAs informed regarding events, known facts of the situation and will dispel rumors. She will be the contact point for incoming calls about the crisis incident from other schools as well as from the media. She will also notify SAM, MTSBA and the MBPE. (**Joe Lamson** is backup)
- F. Follow-up Meetings of the CMT --The Crisis Management Team will meet as necessary following the crisis. The need for these meetings will be determined by the Deputy Superintendent.
- G. Follow-up Communication with the Affected LEA -- The Deputy Superintendent will follow-up with the LEA as necessary after the crisis.

Crisis Response: LEA Checklist for Requested Assistance

Assistance available through OPI	Check if help is requested
1. Legal advice (attorney)	
2. Pupil transportation information	
3. School foods/commodities information	
4. Fiscal/accounting information	
5. Personnel issues	
6. Assistance in dealing with the media	
7. Accreditation advice/information	
8. Data on school violence	
9. Referral to get help from:	
a. child and family services	
b. victims assistance (National Org. for Victims Assistance)	
c. counselors (for students, staff, parents)	
d. health services	
e. law enforcement services	
f. mental health services/resources	
g. instructional materials or equipment	
h. classroom facilities (alternative sites for classes)	
i. other referral help (specify):	
10. Other assistance from OPI (specify):	

Assistance Requested by: (print name) _____

Position/Title: (print) _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Telephone: _____ Fax: _____

E-mail: _____

Please fax to Bob Runkel: (406) 444-3924 or (406) 444-1373

Violence-Related Behaviors Among High School-Aged Youth National and Montana Comparisons

*Sources: 2003 U.S. and 1999, 2001, 2003 and 2005 Montana Youth Risk Behavior Surveys (OPI)
Montana Gun-Free Schools Reports for School Years 1998-99, 1999-00, 2000-01, 2001-02 and 2002-03 (OPI)
Crime in Montana Annual Reports for 1998-2003 (MBCC)*

Youth Risk Behavior Survey Data	Montana 1999	Montana 2001	Montana 2003	Montana 2005	U.S. 2003
Q12. Percent of students who carried a weapon in the past 30 days	20.3	21.4	19.4	21.4	17.1
Q13. Percent of students who carried a gun in the past 30 days	8.6	9.0	8.7	9.0	6.1
Q14. Percent of students who carried a weapon on school property in the past 30 days	9.2	8.7	7.2	10.2	6.1
Q15. Percent of students who did not go to school in the past 30 days because they felt unsafe	3.0	5.5	3.4	4.2	5.4
Q16. Percent of students who had been threatened or injured with a weapon on school property in the past 12 months	6.5	8.5	7.1	8.0	9.2
Q18. Percent of students who were in a physical fight in the past 12 months	32.1	31.6	28.6	30.5	33.0
Q20. Percent of students who were in a physical fight on school property in the past 12 months	12.7	12.2	10.3	10.9	12.8
Q26. Percent of students who actually attempted suicide in the past 12 months	6.7	10.4	9.7	10.3	8.5
Gun-Free Schools Data	1998-99	1999-00	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03
Number of students expelled from school for bringing a gun to school (data since 1999-2000 is the number of <i>incidents</i> rather than the number of <i>expulsions</i>)	15	22	12	31	20

Juvenile Crime Offenses Data	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Number of weapon violations	86	88	76	57	77

Office of Public Instruction Efforts to Create Safe Schools

The Montana Office of Public Instruction's proactive efforts to support safe schools and prevent violence among youth as well as dealing with issues resulting from a school tragedy include:

- providing schools with a biennial assessment tool that includes assessment of school policy on gun-free schools (Note: Montana law requires all school districts to have a gun-free school policy.)
- co-sponsoring the Montana Behavioral Initiative summer institutes which have included a variety of violence prevention strategies, including such things as "Crime Prevention through Environmental Design"
- distributing nearly \$1.5 million in federal Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities prevention funds annually to Montana schools
- collecting data on the violence-related behaviors of Montana youth, and sharing this data with schools and with state and community decision-makers
- providing information to schools on effective violence prevention strategies and programs. Examples of this type of information are:
 - *Safe Schools, Safe Students: A Guide to Violence Prevention Programs*
 - *Early Warning, Timely Response: A Guide to Safe Schools*
 - *Youth Violence in Montana*
 - *Fostering Resiliency in Kids: Protective Factors in the Family, Schools and Community*
 - *For Our Children's Sake: A Call to Community Action Against Youth Violence*
 - *Crisis Management in Schools: A Resource Guide*
 - *Managing Death Issues in the School*
 - *Preventing Chaos in Times of Crisis*
- developing a Safe Schools Web site on OPI's homepage. The Web site contains information on resources, meetings and conferences, school policy and safe school checklists, commercial products, and a link to other Web sites.
- developing a simple checklist for schools to use in performing a self-audit on the extent to which the school has established a safe, disciplined and drug-free school
- making schools aware that they have available to them the resources from the National Safe Schools Resource Center (NSSRC) at the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory in Portland, Oregon. The many resources at the NSSRC include Web-based resources on crisis management, assessment and identification of at-risk students, and a media tool kit.
- Electronic mailboxes have been established which allow for quick alert and response to individual or multiple schools through Internet mail service.